

News Release

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Release No. 1417.98

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USDA ANNOUNCES PRELIMINARY FLUE-CURED TOBACCO REFERENDUM RESULTS

WASHINGTON, January 27, 1998--Preliminary results from a mail referendum held January 12-15 indicate flue-cured tobacco growers voted to continue acreage-poundage marketing quotas for their crops for the 1998, 1999, and 2000 marketing years.

Keith Kelly, Administrator of the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Farm Service Agency, said results show that 10,377 of the 10,534 producers who voted in the referendum -- or 98.5 percent -- voted yes. A vote of at least two-thirds in favor was necessary to continue acreage-poundage marketing quotas.

In the last referendum, which was held in January 1995, 98.7 percent of the voting growers favored marketing quotas on an acreage-poundage basis for the 1995, 1996 and 1997 marketing years.

Flue-cured tobacco is grown in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina and Virginia. These are the state-by-state results:

State	Votes Cast	Percentage Favoring Quotas
Alabama	3	66.7
Florida	134	99.3
Georgia	658	97.7
North Carolina	7,220	98.8
South Carolina	774	98.2
Virginia	1,745	97.8
Total	10,534	98.5

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